

APACHE COUNTY LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREA

Geography

Apache County harbors Arizona's northeastern corner and lays claim to being Arizona's representative to the famous "Four Corners" site. In addition, the county encompasses some of the state's most utilized alpine recreational areas, including the popular Sunrise Ski Resort.

Population

According to the most recent official population figures, produced by the US Census, mid-year estimates for 2000 show 69,423 people reside in Apache County. This resident population accounts for 1.4 percent of state of Arizona's total population. In the ten years since the 1990 census, Apache County's population grew by 12.7 percent, or roughly 1 percent annually compared to the state as a whole which grew over 40 percent for the decade. Chinle is the largest city in the county, with an estimated population of 5,366. Fort Defiance is the next largest, with an estimated population of 4,061. Chinle and Fort Defiance are both unincorporated. The largest incorporated town is Eager with a population estimated to be 4,033.

Income

According to data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis from 1990 to 1999, personal income for Apache County increased 71.2 percent compared to the State's nearly 90 percent. The county's share of rural area personal income has remained near 5 percent from 90' to 99'. On a per capita basis, the gain of 54.6 percent was 8.3 percent above the State's growth of 46.3 percent. Apache County per capita income was approximately \$13,193 in 1999, about one half of the state's level. Average earnings per job were \$27,825 in 1999, which represented an increase of nearly one-third since 1990. Alternatively, the State of Arizona's average earnings per job was \$31,307 in 1999, an increase of 40.3%.

Labor Force

The Apache County labor force shrank by roughly 0.4 percent each year from 1995 to 2000. Apache County employment figures grew, however, with an average annual increase of about 0.6 percent. This affected the unemployment rate downward from 16.3 percent in 1995 to 12.8 percent in 2000.

Employment

Over half of the 19,375 jobs in Apache County in 2000 were in government. The reason for this is that in 1995, jobs on the reservations formerly included in services were reclassified as government. This accounts for the simultaneous increase in government jobs and drop in trade jobs, and TCPU. Nevertheless, the services industry continued to be a significant employer, second only to

government, with 3,175 jobs in 2000. Government and service jobs increased by the greatest degree from 1995 to 2000 by about 7% and 4% respectively each year. Trade jobs were the third most numerous, with 2,050 jobs in 2000. Jobs in manufacturing dwindled the most rapidly at an average rate of 24 percent each year from 1995 to 2000. Trade, Communication, and Public Utilities also decreased, though at a much slower average rate of 2.7 percent per annum.

Growing and Declining

During the year 2000 time the largest industry job growth was experienced in government (+200 jobs), individual family services (+119 jobs), and nonresidential building construction (+68 jobs). The largest employment losses appeared in general merchandise stores (-136 jobs), gasoline service stations (-124 jobs), and personnel supply services (-111). For further details see the enclosed tables.

Forecast

Research Administration is forecasting employment to grow 1.3 percent in PY 01-02 and increase by 2.8 percent in PY 02-03. Countywide unemployment is expected to decrease slightly from the PY 00-01 rate of 12.9 percent to 12.4 percent in PY 01-02 and then to 12.2 percent in PY 02-03. Unemployment in the non-reservation areas is expected to descend from the PY 00-01 rate of 5.2 percent to 5.0 percent in PY 01-02 and then stabilize at 5.0 percent in PY 02-03.

Issues and Concerns

- Low earnings per job growth

Source: Arizona Department of Economic Security, Research Administration, November 2001.